

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 000840

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ECON](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PINR](#) [IS](#) [GOI](#) [EXTERNAL](#) [COUNTERTERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: EGYPTIANS TELL GOI TO GIVE HAMAS TIME

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Ministry of Defense Political Advisor Amos Gilad told the Ambassador February 21 that Egyptian officials encouraged Israel to give the Hamas government time and rely on Cairo to deal with the terrorist group. He believed that this "change" in Egypt's position is motivated by Egyptian fear that the Hamas victory could influence the domestic situation in Egypt. Meanwhile, Gilad pointed out, the Egyptians have pulled most of their experts out of Gaza, ostensibly for three months, while saying they want to train PA security forces as well as have a role in nominating their commanders. Gilad said that the GOI will see what happens over the next few days before making a decision regarding the status of the crossings. End summary.

12. (C) Ministry of Defense Political Advisor Amos Gilad on February 21 shared with the Ambassador and USSC head Lieutenant General Keith Dayton his impressions from meetings during a recent trip to Egypt. Gilad said the bottom line of the Egyptian strategy toward Hamas is that everyone should give the Hamas government time (a year) and Israel should rely on Egypt to handle Hamas. Gilad viewed this stance, which represented the consensus of the Egyptian intelligence community and political leadership, as a "change" from the GOE's previous position. He believed this position is motivated by Egyptian fear that the Hamas victory could influence the domestic situation in Egypt and encourage Islamist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. He said that the Egyptians were surprised by the Hamas win, and had expected the party to win only 40 seats. Gilad said that the Secretary's visit to Egypt would be very important and would

SIPDIS

have an impact on Egyptian views.

13. (C) Gilad pointed out, however, that while GOE officials advocate giving Hamas time, Egypt has pulled most of its experts out of Gaza and is not discussing assistance. In addition, Gilad said, the Egyptians want PA President Mahmud Abbas to control the security services, and they want to train these security personnel, as well as have a role in nominating commanders. The Egyptians do not want PA national security forces stationed along their border, he said. Gilad offered that it would be better if Egypt deployed 5,000 of its troops along the border.

14. (C) Gilad said that Hamas wants to take over the important ministries in the PA. He said the new minister of internal security will surely be a member of Hamas, which will encourage Rashid Abu Shabak to resign or stay independent. He believed that Hamas will try to dismantle the Fatah-dominated PA security services gradually. The Ambassador concurred that the security forces should be used to fight against terror. Their being controlled by a terrorist group would make this impossible.

Crossings

15. (C) The Ambassador said the U.S. wants the crossings to function. He said that as much as possible should be done to strengthen the current crossings regime and the security protocol before Hamas forms the government. He noted that the U.S. is seeking a letter from the PA acknowledging the security protocol. The Ambassador applauded the ongoing GOI effort to upgrade security and infrastructure at the crossings and said the U.S. is moving forward on issues regarding the scanners for the crossings. He said that Israel and the U.S. will need to consult closely before the GOI decides to designate the crossings as international border crossings, because such a move would have legal and policy implications. Lieutenant General Dayton said it is important to have a PA agency in charge of the crossings that is separate from Hamas.

16. (C) Gilad said that the Israeli Government will see what happens over the next few days and then make a decision. Brig. General (res.) Baruch Spiegel, who also attended the meeting, said that 1,209 cargo loads had crossed at Karni on February 20, with 800 of those entering Israel. He said 1,070 loads had crossed on February 19. Spiegel noted that the high volume of traffic had been processed without a scanner, and acknowledged that an unspecified portion of the

individual loads consisted of empty shipping containers.

Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

You can also access this site through the State Department's
Classified SIPRNET website.

JONES